

Come, Holy Spirit, Come  
Psalm 104:24-34

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Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your spirit in this place,  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

Come, Holy Spirit, come. Fill the hearts of your faithful. Send forth your spirit and we shall be created and you shall renew the face of the earth. It's Pentecost! Pentecost is more than red paraments, strange language and smoke in the sanctuary. Pentecost is about the Spirit of God, bringing creation out of chaos, breathing into us the breath of life, restoring in us the joy of our salvation, inviting us to surrender our lives to his will. Come, Holy Spirit, come. Send your Spirit to this place.

WHEN THE SPIRIT COMES, WE ARE CREATED.

*“Oh Lord, how manifold are your works. In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your creatures” (Psalm 104:24).*

When we want to be awed, we go to Disney World or visit the Wild Kingdom or some amusement park. When the Hebrews wanted to be awed, they took a walk in the wilderness or strolled beside the sea. The sights were imposing, impressive, inspiring, incredible. Psalm 104 is a canticle of creation. Everywhere the Psalmist turned he saw the mighty acts of God.

God stretches out the heavens like a tent and sets the earth on its foundation. He waters goats from mountain springs and frolics with the whales of the sea. Our God is a creative God.

Tony Campolo tells about going whale watching off the coast of Cape Cod. “Suddenly,” says Tony, “an elusive humpback whale swam up alongside the boat and poked his head out of the water. For what seemed like thirty seconds this sister of the sea stared directly at me. The encounter took me by surprise. No words can describe the sense of awe and wonder that came over me. For a moment, I was one with God’s creation.”

Teddy Roosevelt, maybe more than any other President of the United States, had a deep appreciation for nature. When he entertained diplomatic guests at the White House, Mr. Roosevelt loved to take them out on the back lawn at the end of the day. Back then the vast array of stars were not dimmed by the city lights. So the heads of states could sit there and enjoy the beauty of heaven. After a while Mr. Roosevelt would say, “Gentlemen, I believe we are small enough now. Let us go to bed.”

What moves you from grandiosity to gratitude? How do you get from self-centeredness to spirituality? What takes you from action to awe? What puts your life in proper perspective? Let the Holy Spirit remind you today that you are not the creator of the universe, but the created of God. It's not all up to you; it's all up to God. Life is to be lived not by grabbing, but by being grateful. The time to start is now.

Come, Holy Spirit, come. BREATHE INTO US THE BREATH OF LIFE.

A few months ago I was awakened in the night with shortness of breath. The thought of not breathing created such anxiety that I wound up in the emergency room. Thankfully, the problem was more in my head than in my lungs. And with a little coaching I am learning to breathe better by living better. Breathing is not something we think about a lot. The living do it all the time. Right now you are breathing—breathing in—breathing out. The Psalmist realized every breath we take and every move we make is a gift of God.

A great, wise man was once asked to describe the best path to health. He thought a moment and replied, “The best thing you can do for your health is to breathe.” Now that is profound.

The Psalmist in Verse 29 says, “*When God hides his face creation is terrified, when God takes away their breath, they die.*” For he breathes into us the breath of life, and these dust balls become living beings.

May I ask you today. What has knocked the wind out of you lately? What has knocked the breath out of you recently? Hillary Clinton announced to the world this week that when her husband confessed to his affair with Monica Lewinski she could hardly breathe. She started gulping for air, began crying and yelling at Bill, wanting to wring his neck (maybe she should have, I don't know) but broken relationships can do that to you. They take the breath out of you. You gulp for air trying to recover in the midst of life.

Nicodemus had run out of breath. This leader of the Jews came to Jesus one night wanting to discuss the meaning of life. Instead of giving him a new rule and more work, Jesus asked him to listen to the wind and be born again. The wind, Nicodemus, the wind. The answer my friend is blowing in the wind. In the New Testament the word for wind is Pneuma, which means spirit, breath, air. Your problem, Nicodemus, is that you are short of breath. You are worn out, tired—too many night meetings, too many stressful days. Nicodemus you need to be born again. Quit trying to control the wind; let it blow and be born from above. Try *being* instead of *doing*.

Job knew what it was to have the breath knocked out of him. In one sweeping disaster he loses his farm, his family, his assets, his accumulations. Lying naked against the earth he dares to ask God to answer the riddle of suffering. Job fails to get an answer. But Job learns this and he says, “*The spirit of the God has*

*made me, the breath of the almighty gives me life” (Job 33:4).*

Whatever our source of breathlessness may be today, there is a simple prayer for you and me.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew. Breathe on me, Breath of God, make me more like you.

Would you dare to pray that kind of prayer today? Breathe on me, breath of God.

For here is the good news. The same Spirit that turned chaos into creation, the same Spirit that breathed into us the breath of life, that same spirit can sweep over our being and make us anew.

WHEN THE SPIRIT COMES, WE ARE RECREATED.

*“I will sing to the Lord all my life. I will sing praise to my God while I have being” (Psalm 104:33).* Are you still singing all the day long? Is there still a joy in your step, a sparkle in your voice and a song in your heart? What has life done to your song?

Eighty-five year old Nadine Stair once said, “If I had my life to live over, I would make more mistakes next time. I’d relax. I’d limber up. I would be sillier than I have been this trip. I would take fewer things seriously. I would take more chances. I would take more trips; I would climb more mountains and swim more rivers. I would eat more ice cream and less beans. I would, perhaps, have more actual troubles, but I’d have fewer imaginary ones.”

“You see, I’m one of those people who live sensibly and sanely hour after hour, day after day. Oh, I’ve had moments and if I had it to do over again, I’d have more of them. In fact, I’d try to have nothing else. Just moments.”

“I’ve been one of those people who never go anywhere without a thermometer, a hot water bottle, a rain coat and a parachute. If I had it to do again, I would travel lighter next time.”

“If I had my life to live over, I would start barefoot earlier in the spring and stay that way later in the fall. I would go to more dances, I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daises.” What has life done to your song? Are you still singing all the day long?

When the day of Pentecost came, glory came down and joy filled the hearts of believers. Outside observers accused them of being drunk. But Peter replied, *“These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It is only nine in the morning!”* I’ve always wondered what he might have said had it been six in the afternoon.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit transformed

- Doubters into believers
- The apprehensive into apostles
- The scared into the sincere
- Doors once locked now burst open with new opportunities. Language and cultures became blessings instead of barriers. This little band of believers, under the power of the Holy Spirit, found no limits to their vision, no pause in their prayers, no boundaries to the gospel. Can you catch the spirit of what happened in the birthday of the Church? What has happened to our song?

The best thing that could happen to any of us today, would be for the Lord to send his Spirit in this place.

O that he would breathe into our dead bodies—the breath of life.

O that he would fill sad hearts with the joy of his salvation.

Come, Holy Spirit, come. Blow like the wind, burn like the fire, convict, consecrate, cleanse until our hearts are pure and our wills are thine.

COME, HOLY SPIRIT, COME, MAKE US MORE LIKE YOU.

There is a simple way to do that. It comes out of the simple act of surrender. “Let our meditations be pleasing to you” (104:34). The word is surrender.

Lloyd Ogilvie—long time pastor of Hollywood Presbyterian Church and now Chaplain of the US Senate writes— “For over thirty years my ministry has been focused on helping religious church members experience spiritual renewal. People experience renewal differently, but it usually begins when the areas of our lives that have been uncommitted to the Lord are brought to him in full surrender.”

“All to Jesus, I surrender, All to him I freely give.” What might that mean for you today? Some worldly pleasures to be forsaken? Would it call for enough humility that I could humbly bow? Why not do it? Why not do it now? “All to Jesus, I surrender, All to him I freely give.” What would that look like for you right now?

Someone said spiritual renewal is like remodeling your house. It takes longer than you hoped and cost more than you planned because it was in a bigger mess than you ever thought possible. Maybe so. But God is in the renovation business. What would it mean for me to surrender my life to the Holy Spirit today?

He can restore our souls. Just let the Holy Spirit come and take control.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

Amen.











